

Meeting Summary

Southeast Regional Landscape Committee

October 18, 2002

9am to 2:00 pm

Whitewater State Park

Attendees:

Ann Pierce, Bill Bruins, Charles Schmitt, Clint Miller, Dan Johnson, Doug Rau, Duane Thorbeck, Jim Brooks, Larry Gates, Lou Chicquette, Matt Norton, Roger Steinberg, and Tim Schlagenhaft

Staff:

Chad Skally

Agenda topics

9:00 to 9:30

Introductions / Background

Group

Discussion:

- Everyone went around and introduced themselves.
- Chad gave a summary of the landscape planning process and the focus for the day being discussion on goals and strategies.

Conclusions: n/a

Action items: n/a

Person responsible: n/a

Deadline:

9:30 to 10:00

Example of Landscape Goals and Strategies

Chad Skally

Discussion:

- Chad presented an example of goals and strategies based on increasing forest corridors. In his presentation there was a handout listing goals, strategies, and information needs. He also had two maps of the landscape showing forested areas and landuse.
- The group discussed this example and began talking about development issues. Many good points were made during this discussion including: the value of forestland is below the value of developed land; many people conserve their forestland based on goodness of heart, tax breaks, or better land stewardship; forestland has increased in recent years; there are conservation ethics in the region; should pragmatically make decisions; working forests are important; zoning only works if it is followed through (ie no special use permits/variances); current focus on short term is not good, must promote long term planning; ag land preservation worked for awhile, use this same concept for forestland.

Conclusions: Good discussion on ideas for goals and strategies, especially relating to development.

Action items: n/a

Person responsible: n/a

Deadline:

10:00 to 10:30 Outline of Outreach and Education Materials Roger Steinberg		
Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roger went through a handout that listed various ideas for outreach and education. Two specific items on the list that were discussed were creating a PowerPoint presentation on the landscape planning process and products, and using issue papers to help educate stakeholders on landscape issues, goals, and strategies. Roger mentioned that he is receiving training on developing issue papers, and that these appear to be a useful tool in educating people on complex issues. There was also some general discussion on using committee members to present either PowerPoint presentation or issue papers to the groups they represent. 		
Conclusions: PowerPoint and Issue Papers seem to be effective ways to provide outreach and education to stakeholder groups.		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop PowerPoint presentation on southeast landscape including: current assessment information, issues, vision, and goals and strategies 	Chad and Roger	1/30/02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to develop format for issues papers 	Roger	1/30/02

10:00 to 1:45 Prioritization and Discussion of Goals/Strategies Group		
Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group ranked the goals for the region and a count was taken to see which goals had the most votes. On page 3 is the list of goals and summary of votes. The group then broke into two small groups: one to discuss the development goal, one to discuss the forestland goal. The summaries from these two groups are on pages 4 to 6. 		
Conclusions: There was very good discussion on specific goals and strategies for these two broad goals.		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop specific goals and strategies for people to review 	Chad	2/15/02

10:00 to 10:30 Next Steps Chad Skally		
Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group discussed if there needed to be another big meeting with everyone. They agreed that future meetings could be focused on specific goals, and people interested in those goals would attend. Once final goals and strategies are developed they could be presented to the big group (most likely this spring). 		
Conclusions: Continue developing specific goals and strategies with interested people.		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up meetings to discuss specific goals and strategies 	Chad	2/15/02

List of Goals and Tally of Votes

Goals	Votes
Increase development patterns that support sustainable natural resources (manage urban sprawl).	9
Increase forest regeneration / acres of forestland	5
Increase biologically diverse acres	4
Increase acres of healthy forest stands / Reduce problem species	3
Increase forested corridors	3
Increase interagency partnerships with state, federal and other landowners	3
Increase ordinances pertaining to sustainable forest resources management	3
Increase use of state and federal cost-share and incentive programs	3
Protect, restore and enhance a variety of wetland habitats	3
Increase forest management planning	2
Increase outreach activities	2
Reduce soil erosion; Reduce contaminated runoff; Increase forested buffers	1
Expand educational programs for contractors, developers, landowners, and land managers regarding erosion control practices on construction and development projects	0
Increase better timber harvests	0
Increase monitoring	0

Goal

Increase development patterns that support sustainable natural resources (manage urban sprawl).

Relation to Vision Statement

Natural communities and regionally significant areas have been identified and management objectives have been developed for their sustainability. Native species are protected and their populations maintained. Exotic species and invasive diseases are identified and their effects minimized through proper forest management. A geographic information system (GIS) of natural and cultural resource information has been developed for the region to guide planning and monitoring activities, and is continually updated. Public agencies, private organizations, and interested individuals correspond often to ensure proper management of forest resources and collaborate to promote the continued health of Southeastern Minnesota's unique environment.

Other Related Goals

- Increase interagency partnerships with state, federal and other landowners
- Increase ordinances pertaining to sustainable forest resources management
- Increase outreach activities
- Increase monitoring

Details of Goal

- Define development patterns that support sustainable natural resources.
- Develop common policy framework to address Blufflands.
- Implement development patterns that support sustainable natural resources.
- Establish continuity of plans to reduce unintended consequences.
- Manage sprawl: look at compact development and consider current and future infrastructure costs.

Strategies to Achieve Goal

- Provide access to information (such as GIS) to developers.
- Get the SE MN planning and zoning administrators and elected officials involved.
- Develop consistent policies for the region
- Convene a group of leaders, planners, citizens, etc. to begin discussions
- Utilize public/private partnerships when implementing strategies.
- Monitor, measure, and report on indicators every year (example Carver County has environmental indicators on surface water quality, solid waste generation, recycling and use of open space.)

Information Needs

- Landuse patterns (past, present, and future: involves computer visualization)
- Current zoning (documents in each jurisdiction)
- Success stories (identify and describe stories of successful policies, e.g., Transfer of Development Rights)
- Costs to local governments from scattered housing
- Measure the number of variances issued and denied by counties (see what the landscape looks like in areas with variances, see what it would of looked like with no variances, does the quality and commitment (ie level of effort and public involvement) to the land use plan affect the number of variances given out)

Goal

Increase forest regeneration and acres of forestland.

Relation to Vision Statement

Streams, lakes, and wetlands are surrounded by healthy riparian vegetation, dominated by native species. Timber harvest and rural and urban development are restricted close to water resources, thus reducing the potential impact on water quality. Diversity of vegetation and animals is promoted through environmental corridors on public and private land... Cost-share, incentive, and tax break programs that provide economically viable options to promote forest management are available for landowners. Professional assistance is readily available to forest owners to assist in forest management in order to optimize forest resources and fulfill specific forest owner goals without jeopardizing sustainability and biodiversity... Native species are protected and their populations maintained. Exotic species and invasive diseases are identified and their effects minimized through proper forest management

Other Related Goals

- Increase biologically diverse acres
- Increase acres of healthy forest stands / Reduce problem species
- Increase forested corridors
- Increase interagency partnerships with state, federal and other landowners
- Increase use of state and federal cost-share and incentive programs
- Increase forest management planning
- Increase outreach activities
- Reduce soil erosion; Reduce contaminated runoff; Increase forested buffers
- Expand educational programs for contractors, developers, landowners, and land managers regarding erosion control practices on construction and development projects
- Increase better timber harvests

Details of Goal

- Manage forest according to appropriate site conditions:
 - in mesic sites promote a mix of maple, basswood, and oak
 - in dry (oak savanna) and dry/mesic (hardwood) sites promote regeneration and management of oak.
 - in prairie and wetland areas promote appropriate native vegetation
- Focus activities near existing forestland (to expand core and corridor areas) and in marginal agriculture land (e.g. pastures, steep terrain).
- Replace areas with buckthorn to native species (need to develop methods to do this)
- Reduce cattle in woods.
- Increase the amount of land managed for forests

Strategies to Achieve Goal

- Make people aware of goals through increased outreach
 - Provide silvicultural methods for management of mesic sites, oak savanna, and hardwood sites
 - Have loggers reference landowners to stewardship plan writers
 - Provide classes for loggers on landscape goals and stewardship planning. Would need incentive for loggers to take. For example could be placed on a special list of loggers for the DNR to reference to landowners.
 - Base outreach and education on audience (private woodlot, private farm close to forested corridor, or private marginal cropland owner; also elected officials, stakeholder groups).
- Create natural resources contact list (foresters, loggers, consultants, etc) for landowners.
- Complete research on methods to provide direct and substantial value to forestland:
 - Look into Wisconsin tax laws (mill tax)
 - Look into developing a new working forest system that people with forestland can enroll in to have their land sustainably managed and receive yearly payments based on a proportion of net value of products removed from all people enrolled.
 - Develop laws and mechanisms that value (preserve forestland), similar to the preserve agriculture land laws developed in the past.
- Research methods to convert (remove) buckthorn to native species

Information Needs

- Satellite imagery to locate buckthorn areas to focus efforts.
- Research on effects of different economic proposals to increase the value of forest land
- Forest inventory of cover types and age classes (can get from Forest Inventory and Analysis, and satellite data)
- Map of pre-settlement/plant communities to provide people with information on appropriate forest management (planting, harvesting, etc) for their area (can use Marshner's pre-settlement data, bearing tree data, or soil data).

Vision

The vision is based from information collected in the *Forest Resource Management in Southeast Minnesota A Landscape Perspective* (Class and Skally 2001, MFRC Document LP-0502) document edited by the Southeast Regional Committee July 24, 2002.

In approximately 100 years the southeast landscape will contain:

Streams, lakes, and wetlands are surrounded by healthy riparian vegetation, dominated by native species. Timber harvest and rural and urban development are restricted close to water resources, thus reducing the potential impact on water quality. Diversity of vegetation and animals is promoted through environmental corridors on public and private land. Wild areas, park and trail facilities are managed to support the integrity of natural areas and facilitate public access and recreation.

Cost-share, incentive, and tax break programs that provide economically viable options to promote forest management are available for landowners. These programs will help protect large blocks of forestland from development. Professional assistance is readily available to forest owners to assist in forest management in order to optimize forest resources and fulfill specific forest owner goals without jeopardizing sustainability and biodiversity.

Community and citizen action groups are active in forest management, monitoring, and restoration. Education programs for children and adults promote appreciation and stewardship of the environment.

Best management practices (BMPs) are emphasized in forest management activities. Education on proper implementation of BMPs is provided to contractors, developers, landowners, loggers, managers and monitoring of their success is performed.

Natural communities and regionally significant areas have been identified and management objectives have been developed for their sustainability. Native species are protected and their populations maintained. Exotic species and invasive diseases are identified and their effects minimized through proper forest management. A geographic information system (GIS) of natural and cultural resource information has been developed for the region to guide planning and monitoring activities, and is continually updated. Public agencies, private organizations, and interested individuals correspond often to ensure proper management of forest resources and collaborate to promote the continued health of Southeastern Minnesota's unique environment.